

Top Secret

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Tuesday 31 January 1978

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Tuesday, 31 January 1978.

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The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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NICARAGUA: Government Moves to End Strike

25X1 [] //Some businesses reopened over the weekend in Managua despite announcements by business organizations that they would try to continue their week-long strike. With firm backing from the National Guard and the majority Liberal Party, the government's measures to get people back to work should succeed, although occasional disorders are likely during the next several weeks.//

25X1 [] The reactivation of the National Emergency Committee--formed after the 1972 earthquake--gives the government additional powers and the legal mechanism to deal both with immediate economic dislocations and with the news media without invoking a state of siege. The committee plans to purchase wholesale quantities of basic foods to alleviate shortages in urban areas affected by the strike, and has used its public order powers to force the media to stop reporting on the strike. The National Guard has also offered protection to any businesses that reopen.

25X1 [] In a speech broadcast on Saturday, President Somoza rejected opposition demands that he resign and accused the business sector of promoting the lockout without regard to the harm done to wage earners and small businessmen.

25X1 [] //Somoza's annoyance with the opposition's intransigence has become increasingly evident. At the moment, he does not seem inclined to offer any concessions but rather to bring his opponents into line by a show of firmness. Because the majority of the opposition does not want a confrontation, his tactic may be successful at least for the short-run.//

USSR: Electric Power Shortage

25X1 [] Soviet officials have warned that it will be difficult to meet the electric power demands of the national economy again this year. Party and local Soviet organizations have been asked to help discipline consumers so that there will be no interruptions of power supplies.

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[] Production of electric power was short of official targets last year, even though the planned rate of increase was the lowest since World War II. Hydroelectric power production, for example, was 10 percent below plan. A large hydroelectric power plant in Central Asia, completed in 1975, still has not generated any electricity because of unprecedented water shortages and the high priority given to irrigation. Low water levels have also curtailed hydroelectric production on the vast rivers of Siberia.

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[] This year, the Soviets plan to increase the production of electric power from hydroelectric and nuclear power plants much more than from thermal power plants. But even the 3 percent planned increase in output from the thermal plants will raise fossil fuel consumption by almost 10 million tons of standard fuel. Because the Soviets are stressing conservation programs for both fuel and hydro resources, the electric power industry will find it hard to meet these demands. []

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USSR: Secondary School Changes

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[] *The USSR is planning to increase vocational training in its general secondary schools. Moscow hopes to cope with a slowly growing labor force by accelerating and improving the employability of secondary school graduates. Many students rejected by colleges and universities now return to school for some form of career training, and this delays their entry into the labor market.*

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[] Vocational training in general secondary schools (grades 9-10) will be increased from two to four hours each week. Eighth-grade graduates will also receive expanded counseling services, and local commissions will help them choose one of four alternative paths of secondary education:

- Vocational technical school, a three-year program that provides a specific skill but only a slight chance for admission to higher schools.
- Secondary specialized schools, a three- or four-year course for technicians and other semiprofessionals.

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- General secondary school, the traditional two-year program that is the path to higher education.
- Schools for working youth, which provide part-time general secondary education intended mostly for those in rural areas.

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[] This four-track system, if enforced, will resolve several anomalies in the Soviet school system. The share of general secondary school graduates admitted to higher schools declined from 40 percent in 1965 to 20 percent in 1976, and increasing numbers of secondary school graduates were untrained and unemployable. Many of these students enrolled in parallel secondary school systems, where they spent an extra year or more and thus delayed entering the labor force.

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[] Moscow is apparently trying to increase the skill level of workers to help offset the slowdown in the growth of its labor force. This latest action follows legislation passed last September that called for improved and expanded vocational and technical schools. []

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BRIEFS

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South Africa

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[] Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, the leader of South Africa's 5.5 million Zulus, spoke for four hours to an enthusiastic

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crowd of more than 15,000 in Soweto on Sunday. The mass rally was the largest in Soweto since the riots in 1976, but there was no confrontation either with police or militant students.

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[] In his speech, to an audience mainly of adult Zulus, Buthelezi denounced apartheid and the homelands policy of separate development. He advocated black unity, described his own Zulu-based political organization, "Inkatha," as the best vehicle for realizing power for all people, and if the black township's leaders are still in prison, called for a boycott of the local elections that are to be held soon in Soweto. Buthelezi also asked striking students to return to school, and condemned any international economic sanctions against South Africa because he believes blacks would be the ones to suffer most.

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[] The success of the rally reflects not only Buthelezi's control over his own Zulu tribesmen, but also effective police control of the township and the current poor morale among the student leaders. []

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